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October 10, 1945

A unit for conducting sample surveys

Many samplings are conducted in Iowa each year by departments, research institutes and extension services of the College. The usefulness of the information obtained has led to the demand for greater facility and extent in this method of learning facts about the state. Both government and commercial agencies are seeking information not only about these facts but also about efficient methods of collecting them. The Statistical Laboratory of the College and research units set up in the Bureau of the Census, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and by some of the larger corporations require means of testing and improving their theories about various phases of sampling. To meet these needs it is proposed to set up a Sampling Unit in the Statistical Laboratory whose functions may be designated as follows:

1. To assist the advise College groups who wish to get information about Iowa by means of sample surveys.

   A. To design or help design the allocation of the sampling.
   B. To give any desired assistance in the construction of the schedule.
   C. To do the interviewing or to advise and assist those who do it.
   D. To summarize the data or to render any desired help in the summary.
   E. To help in making efficient estimates of the facts in Iowa based on the sample results.

2. To conduct experimental surveys for groups interested in research in sampling theory or in sampling methodology. This would include any phase of sampling such as construction of schedules, interviewing technique, and the design of samplings to produce the maximum amount of information per dollar cost. In this way the services of the unit would be available not only to research groups of the College but also to government agencies and commercial firms desiring to subsidize this kind of research.

3. It is contemplated that the sampling unit will consist of three full-time staff members at annual salaries totalling $7800, each to be provided with an automobile.

4. It is assumed that each person or agency utilizing the facilities of the sampling unit will provide operating expenses and subsistence for samplers in the field as well as clerical expense in summarizing the data.

The mounting interest in sampling theory and practice call for the institution of the sampling unit as soon as possible. Pertinent considerations are: (i) Available office space and equipment; (ii) budgetary provisions; and (iii) completion of one or more of the proposed projects with outside agencies.

This memorandum is being submitted with the idea that the policy of the college be defined as soon as feasible in order that negotiations may proceed with the several parties now interested.

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at the Wisconsin Historical Society as part of
"Unlocking the Airwaves: Revitalizing an Early Public and Educational Radio Collection."

A collaboration among the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities,
University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Communication Arts,
and Wisconsin Historical Society.

Supported by a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from
the National Endowment for the Humanities

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